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THE DARK AGES.

Strange thoughts rise in the minds of some, when contemplating the Middle, or, as they contemptuously designate them, the Dark Ages. They see, or think they see, awful shapes flitting to and fro through the murky air, and hovering over scenes of pestilence and death. Should some calm observer attempt to guide their attention to certain very clear proofs that life, health, and happiness, were enjoyed by the men and women of those times, they do but sagely shake their heads, and marvel at his credulity. Such minds are doubtless, at present, in great tribulation; for numbers of Christians, thoughtful and learned men, do persist in asserting, that the middle ages were not so very dark; that the sun did really shine upon happy and holy men; that wisdom had not returned to the skies, nor faith vanished from the earth. But those who scorn the middle ages are yet numerous, and are supported by the prejudices of the multitude, whose eyes have been most carefully hoodwinked by a class of English encyclopedists, and "philosophical historians." Every school history has its prettily turned sentences, nicely fitted to imbue the youthful mind with a due horror of the days that are past, whilst, if we take up a work of greater pretensions, the author, assuming his most elegant air of philosophism, gravely assures us, "that whether the superstition of these dark ages had actually passed that point, when it becomes more injurious to public morals, and the welfare of society, than the *entire absence* of all religious notions, is a very complex question." (See Hallam's Eur. Mid. Ages, iii. 349.) That is to say, it is *very* doubtful whether Atheism or Christianity, as felt and practised in the middle ages, were preferable! After reading such passages, the Churchman turns to those solemn and heart-cheering words of his Saviour, "The gates of hell shall never prevail against her." These alone suffice to demonstrate the ignorance of men who write as if the holy Catholic Church could die; as if, in the middle ages, the visible body of Christ had become lost amid the sin and darkness of earth. It is well that our hearts have so glorious and well defined a principle by which to guide our views of Church history, in a time when no charge against our ancestors in the faith is too gross, or too malignant to meet with applause. Is the great law, "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour," to be forgotten in respect of the dead? Are they not, in a deep and emphatic sense, our neighbours? Nay more, are they not our brethren, members with us of the whole family in heaven and earth? Shall we then eagerly receive every libel against them, which infidel or irreverent minds have framed? Surely a depraved condition of the moral feelings is indicated by this readiness to believe the *worst* of ancient Church times. If our forefathers have erred, it is with deep sorrow the sad tale should be told; the black line in the family genealogy can never delight a true-hearted descendant. If we must censure, let deep love accompany and modify each tone of disapproval. Even should we meet with indiscriminating and rash applauders of mediæval times, it is foolish to answer their eulogies with our invectives. Mutual exasperation and schism without end will be the result; whilst we shall recede farther and farther from historical truth, and dwell in a region of romance and dreams. Amongst the signs of the present times, we may hail the rising of a more impartial judgment respecting the history of the Church; men are becoming willing to enter into communion with past ages, to use their eyes in looking on remote times, instead of taking the opinion of infidel or anti-Church historians. We may thus hope to possess ere long juster and more comprehensive views of that wonderful path along which the armies of the living God have marched, on the grand crusade against the powers of evil. The mouldering columns which mark their line of march are being numbered; the ancient inscriptions and forgotten monuments are dug out from the moss-covered ruins, and allowed to tell their own strange stories of those whose handy-work they are. As the discovered tombs of ancient Etruria have told a tale very different from that insinuated by the partial and prejudiced Roman historians, so the vast stores of historical documents, relating to the middle ages, recently published, have compelled reasonable minds to regard with distrust the narrow and illiberal statements of many modern historians. We have been too long the victims of writers, who regarded themselves as the condescending patrons rather than the children of the Church; and some of whom feel their dignity compromised by that stiff nod of recognition with which at times they deign to honour Christianity. From such, no Christian censure of mediæval error, no Christian estimate of mediæval virtue, could be expected.

But turning from those who despise, and those who unduly exalt the middle ages, let us take up a single subject in reference to those times, viz. the *knowledge of the Scriptures* then possessed by the clergy; the question will stand: "What knowledge of the Bible,

and what reverence for it, were possessed by men in mediæval times?

Some resolve this inquiry into two distinct portions—the knowledge possessed by the clergy and monastic bodies, and that existing amongst the general mass of the laity; but such a division is of little use, for even in those times no impassable gulf separated the various orders of the community. From the lowest of the people sprang not unfrequently the highest ornaments of the ecclesiastical body, as when a Hertfordshire peasant rose to the papal throne, and Adrian IV. bore witness to the amalgamation of classes in the middle ages. This connexion of ranks would necessarily prevent any kind of knowledge from being exclusively in the hands of any one class. The higher clergy and superior monks were in close *union* with all the lower branches of the clerical system; and these again were in immediate contact with the laity at every point. Thus if the clerical body were students of God's word to any extent, it is not likely that the mass around would be wholly unleavened. We may therefore confine our present inquiries to the *clergy* of those ages; and ask what did *they* know of the Bible?

The first proof of their biblical knowledge consists in that constant reference to the Scriptures which characterizes the mediæval writers. These allusions and citations are not made in the formal and stiff manner of a presbyterian lecturer, who, quietly assuming the ignorance of his audience, is compelled to give chapter and verse lest the hearers should be unable to find the cited text. On the contrary, the divines of the primitive and middle ages quote from the sacred books with a freedom which marks accurate knowledge, in both author and reader, preacher and audience.

To make the proof on this point complete would require a full analysis of all the works written in the middle ages; and as this is obviously impossible, a selection from the whole evidence must suffice: the adduced cases must therefore be regarded more as a specimen of what can be proved, than the exhibition of a full argument. In order to present the evidence with all possible fairness, let us take one writer from England in the twelfth century, and another from the continent in the next age. These are Peter of Blois, archdeacon of London, a man of no extraordinary ability, and Thomas Aquinas, whose higher fame and more commanding intellect can furnish no reason for our rejection of his testimony in this matter. Let us first approach Peter of Blois, and ascertain whether this priest of the English Church was unacquainted with the Divine word. He speaks through his letters and sermons; and in his moderately-sized volume of writings, we find references to nearly every book of the Old and New Testament, all made in the most easy manner, in connexion with subjects of every kind. We meet with passages from all the books of Moses, Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Job, and in abundance from the Psalms; also from Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the Canticles, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Jonah, Micah, Habakkuk, and Malachi. Thus it is clear that Peter of Blois must have been tolerably acquainted with nearly every one of the Old Testament writers. If we turn to the New Testament, we find him alluding to every one of its books, except the Epistle to the Colossians, and the 1st and 2d Epistles of St. John. The number of these references is about 500, and applied with the ease of a man well versed in the holy oracles. Yet Peter of Blois was not looked upon as a marvel by the divines of his time: they saw nothing wonderful in this full acquaintance with the Bible. It is evident that no preacher could thus use the language and spirit of Scripture unless his audience had been tolerably versed in the holy oracles; for otherwise he would have been unintelligible. We are now entitled to draw three conclusions—First, that Peter of Blois was thoroughly conversant with the Scriptures. Secondly, that his knowledge could not have been *much* above that of his contemporaries, or some indication of such superiority would have been preserved; the clergy in the twelfth century, therefore, may fairly be supposed to have been familiar with the word of God. Thirdly, could the laity in general have been so very ignorant of the Scriptures, when a preacher so fully referred them to Scripture? We do not infer that *great* biblical knowledge then existed, that is not our present object; whether an exalted state of piety is necessarily consequent upon text-quoting fluency, may remain in a safe state of doubt; but that the foregoing facts present a most decisive contradiction to the vulgar tales of mediæval ignorance of Scripture. Those who are able and willing may pursue this argument further; but we must for the present leave Peter of Blois, and call, for a short time, another witness before us.

Thomas Aquinas is too often regarded merely as a subtle thinker; but he was also "mighty in the Scriptures." Here we must ask those who suppose that the Bible was a book despised in the middle ages, to cast their eye over the thick array of Scripture texts which shed their brightness on the pages of Aquinas. Take that astonishing production, the "Summa Theologiæ," and mark the crowd of Scripture citations by which Aquinas supports and illustrates his various positions. Is such a man to be deemed ignorant of the Bible, or is such a charge to be brought against an age in which a writer could so unhesitatingly use the whole body of revealed truth? It is not from some one or two portions that Aquinas drew his texts, but from *every* book of the Old and New Testaments. The *manner* in which the various passages are applied proves the accuracy, as their abundance evinces the extent and readiness, of his knowledge.

A second argument proving the prevalence of biblical studies in the middle ages, is drawn from the numerous commentaries and other works explanatory of the Bible, which were written in those times. When we listen to such historians as Robertson, Henry, and all that race of writers, we naturally suppose, with the *accurate* D'Aubigné, that the discovery of a Bible was an event truly marvellous; but when we walk into the churches, monasteries, libraries, and homes of men in mediæval times, we hear a Scripture language on every side—we see the first minds busily engaged in illustrating the holy records. Let any impartial man open a common book—Cave's Litera

ria Historia—and mark the long line of writers which each century presents. Some may *now* be little esteemed; but the greatest in that bright host were men whose lives were spent in the study and explication of the divine book. We do not here advocate the notion that an age of commentaries is *necessarily* distinguished by its scriptural knowledge. A commentary may certainly exhibit as much ignorance and presumption as any other species of composition; an assertion which might easily be proved from more than one of our English "Family Bibles." A schismatical or heretical period, when jarring sectaries use the Bible as the banner round which to rank in varied array their pestilent errors, may abound in works professing to explain the Scriptures; so in a more Catholic and united era, faith and love will not require—will rather avoid,—such guides. Nevertheless, as the intimation of the Holy Scriptures are most clearly understood by men of superior sanctity and wisdom, so is it to be expected that they should, from time to time, reflect upon those beneath them the light which they have received. Now such elevated minds are given to every age of the Church, except, *perhaps*, in times of great corruption; it is, therefore, natural to mark the absence of any work on the Bible as an evil sign for the period in which it occurs. But the middle ages have not this mark upon them. Century after century contributed its portion to the treasury of the Church;—commentaries did not, indeed, so abound as to indicate the existence of a feverish and earthly speculation, but came forth in number and kind most suitable to the requirements of the faithful.

Another work developing vast theological learning, applied to the illustration of the Bible, is the commentary of Aquinas on the four Gospels. This production, fitly called the *Catena Aurea* exhibits that reverence for Catholic tradition, and the sense of the early Church, which ruled the most original intellects of the middle ages. The learning and care shown in the composition of the *Catena* may be thus illustrated. On the first verse only of St. Matthew's Gospel, Aquinas cites passages from St. Jerome, Athanasius, Ambrose, Chrysostom, Augustine, Cyril, Pope Leo, Rabanus, Remigius, and Isidore. Or take the first twelve verses of the fifth chapter, comprising the Beatitudes, and we find therein the following series of citations, forming in themselves a Catena Patrum. St. Jerome is cited ten times, St. Augustine twenty-five, St. Chrysostom twenty-four, St. Ambrose eight, St. Hilary seven times; besides which are many passages from other ancient writers. The like abundance of illustration runs through the whole work, yet so compressed is this knowledge, that a closely printed octavo volume would easily contain every word of the Catena. This work, abounding in patristic wisdom, was not unappreciated by the age in which it appeared; the admiration of pious men was expressed by the significant *golden*. Waddington pronounces of the works of Aquinas. that they are now *confined to the shelves* of a few profound students, whence they will *never* again descend," (Hist. chap. 21.) We apprehend this prophecy is as likely to be fulfilled as those in the old almanacks of Moore. As the study of ancient Church writers revives, the Catena of Aquinas, at least, will not be neglected. We trust a sufficient number of facts has now been produced to prove that the Scriptures were not only read, but zealously studied, by the most influential men in the middle ages. These instances are not taken from one period, but extend from the eighth to the fourteenth century, and are wholly inconsistent with the notions so shamelessly reiterated by some, that the Bible was the neglected book of the middle ages. The reader will bear in mind how this strange opinion has been attacked in the preceding remarks, first by an allusion to the constant *references* to Scripture met with in the writers of those times, and secondly, by adducing from the host of mediæval writers, many who have zealously and laboriously commented on the sacred oracles.

A third argument in confirmation of the preceding views may be drawn from the course of Scripture reading appointed in some at least of the larger monasteries. As this custom is clearly proved, and is no where mentioned as a marvellous usage, in the middle age writers, we can but infer its agreement with the practices of that time. One instance must suffice. In the Spicilegium of D'Achery is a letter written by a monk of Cluni, named Ulric, to William, abbot of Kirshaw, in the Black Forest. It gives an account of the order in which the Bible was read by the monks of Ulric's own convent, from which we see, that in the eleventh century, the whole of the Scriptures was studied on a settled plan in the monasteries. The abbot to whom this treatise was sent, is deemed the restorer of the Benedictine rule in Germany, being the instrument in *restoring* or erecting more than a hundred houses of that order. Thus we may fairly infer that the Bible readings in Cluni would be imitated in the numerous foundations under the influence of William of Hirschau. The chapter containing this sketch is headed, "Quomodo Testamentum legatur utrumque," and needs no recitation in this place. Mr. Maitland has given its substance in article No. 20; the books of Scripture, and the particular seasons appropriated to each are specified, and also certain commentaries, and explanatory homilies of the Fathers. What better rules could have been instituted for preserving scriptural knowledge?

A fourth argument tending to the same result must at least be suggested. Though it will not directly prove that the Bible was *studied*, it will certainly indicate the *reverence* in which it was held; and this is an important part of our subject. Those who would have us believe the Bible to have been then the unread book, are not slow to hint that it was also lightly esteemed. The two charges are indeed closely connected; hence, whatsoever fact directly refutes the one, will indirectly meet the other.

The facts to which we call a moment's attention are the costly adornments, rich illuminations, and elaborate penmanship, bestowed so lavishly on the manuscripts of the Holy Scriptures in the middle ages. This custom could not have *prevailed* unless the Bible had been regarded with a high degree of reverence. Men do not invest neglected things with a covering of splendour and magnificence; the outward respect

is a witness of the inward devotion. Thus the Jew beheld with delight the visible glories of his temple, as embodying before the eyes of the nations the deep homage paid by him to the holy of holies. He would not thus have ornamented a rustic hut. Nothing is more frequently presented to our notice in Church history than the rich outlay of ornament bestowed on the copies of the sacred writings. We read of copies of the Gospels adorned with golden letters, and enriched with costly gems; of some written with gold on purple vellum; others bound in plates of silver and gold, bore witness to no common spirit of veneration for the divine word.

Our fifth and last argument on this point is drawn from the time and labour so lovingly bestowed by mediæval scribes in multiplying copies of the Holy Scriptures. These instances prove their zeal for the preservation of that book which they are so often represented as neglecting. It was by the never-ceasing labours of these industrious men that so many precious MSS. have been transmitted to us.

Whatever may be thought of the amount of intellect required in a copyist, such a work was a great consumer of time and of the mind's energy. Mr. Maitland gives the result of a calculation which may show the vast amount of labour connected with the office of a scribe. He supposes that a fairly written copy of the Bible in English would take an expert clerk ten months to write, and will cost, in labour only, 60 or 70*l.*, at the law-stationer's rate of payment. But this estimate cannot reach the outlay of time and money necessary for the production of those richly ornamented MSS. so often written in the middle ages. Such an employment then occupied the minds of many, who in the present day would direct their attention in a less mechanical channel. These labours were, nevertheless, absolutely necessary for the preservation of the Scriptures themselves, before the invention of printing; and as the accuracy of a MS. was an important consideration, the work of transcription could not be left to the more ignorant monks, but engaged the time of the most instructed. How many keen intellects and imaginative minds were bound down by the toilsome labour of incessant copying, whose energies might have led them to nobler pursuits! Yet why say nobler; more real benefit may result from the preservation of ancient MSS. than from the ten thousand speculations by which ingenious men have often beguiled themselves and others.

Let us bear in mind, that on the pens of middle age ecclesiastics the Christian world, of those and all succeeding times, depended for a due supply of the Holy Scriptures. The clergy were the book-makers of Europe; and nothing short of ignorance or malice can persist in heaping abuse on the guardians and transmitters of all those ancient MSS. of the Scriptures by which we have gained *our* knowledge of the Bible. Whenever we open the sacred book let us gratefully remember, that to the diligent love, patience, and industry of mediæval Christians, we owe its preservation. Whether the preservers are to be regarded as its despisers is a question refuted by its own folly. The whole argument, therefore, stands thus: that the popular writers and preachers of the middle ages abound in references to Scripture; that the sacred books were freely and fully commented upon; that the Bible was read throughout in most, or many monasteries; that respect for it was evinced by the costly ornaments bestowed on the MS.; that it was diffused and preserved by the labours of many scribes. We might now leave the subject, were it not that some objections, likely to be raised at this point, require a short notice.

The first may thus be expressed: "You tell us that the clergy read and studied the Scripture, but we say that the *people* could not *read* the Bible, did not possess it; and, therefore, we still assert that the mass of men were ignorant of its truths: and therefore in darkness." Let such a reasoner remember, that if the clergy knew the Scriptures themselves, which the terms of the argument *suppose*, but *wilfully* kept the laity in ignorance, they must have been in a deeper moral degradation than the nature of the case allows; for is it not morally impossible that a whole order of men should themselves enter into the spirit of the Bible, should feel its doctrines to be necessary to salvation, and yet *wilfully* conceal it from their brethren? The thing is a moral impossibility.

A great mistake is frequently made in this matter, by those who persist in judging every age of the Church by the notions prevalent in their own time, or within their own circle. Such suppose, that if the mass of the *people* were unable to read the Scriptures for themselves, religion could not have widely prevailed. Alas, then, for the age in which our Saviour preached; when the souls of men could but receive the oracles of Heaven by *hearing*. Do we seriously think that the *bulk* of the early converts could read the copies of the New Testament? or that they had copies to read? Were those primitive ages of the Church rude, brutal, and ignorant? "No," says History; and she scorns to say more. Yet, of the army of martyrs and confessors, who glorified Jesus by the deaths to which they submitted, how many could read the Greek or Syriac copies of the Gospels? Truth may enter by the *ear* as well as by the eye; be received from the mouth of a divinely-commissioned preacher as fully as from the printers' types. This state of the mass of society was accordingly met by a suitable provision: the Apostles were sent to *preach* to every creature under heaven, not to translate Scripture into every tongue, and publish them "without note or comment." So in the middle ages of the Church, travelling bodies of presbyters sounded over each diocese the instruction needful for each time. Nor were the clergy content with this; in their eagerness to provide knowledge for the people, they had recourse to means which some thoughtful men amongst us deem to have proved causes of corruption; but *perhaps* no one in this age is competent to judge decisively in this matter. We here allude to that early alliance between the clergy and the minstrel, which gave a peculiar character to much of the religious poetry of Europe, and led to those far-famed dramas called "Mysteries." We only allude to these facts as indicating a wish on the part of the Church to present re-

ligion in every possible aspect to the minds of men: hoping thus to win some. Nor can there be much hesitation in admitting this to have been the *original* object. The plan may not have succeeded, or it may have been fitted to *some* states of society only, or it may have been radically wrong: with these questions, though full of interest, we do not now meddle. That the early clergy aimed at good by this dramatizing of scripture few will deny, who attend to the character of the Saxon Cædmon's poems, in which he evidently sought to fill the popular mind with scripture history, by connecting its facts with the charms of verse and musical melodies. That his plan was admired there is no doubt; that it wrought no good, no *great* good even, how can *we* say? Such an example may have induced zealous men to follow in the same track, to encourage the religious drama. Let a reader take up the Coventry Mysteries, and see the whole of the New Testament history, or rather, the history of all time, pass before him in those pages; can he say, *confidently*, that for *no state* of society are they adapted? May not *such* rude developments of scripture, especially when limited to their religious object, have been to many a simple mind a spring of deep and holy feeling? However, one thing we must bear in mind, that the religious drama was *intended* to instruct the people, and to aid the diffusion of scripture knowledge; therefore the preceding remarks prove that the clergy in the middle ages did *try*, according to their means, to enlighten the *masses*. Even Mr. Waddington has, in speaking of these times, been compelled to admit, that "sermons, homilies, interpretations, and *illustrations of Scripture* were published in *great profusion*." (Church Hist. chap. 17.) This testimony from one who has evinced a most unhappy tendency on many points is valuable.—*Christian Remembrancer.*

THE PLAGUE OF WHITEWASH.

But worse than the plunder and havoc of mistaken zealots, worse than ruin and the alterations of ignorant churchwardens, is the plague of whitewash, which seems to have grasped, Briareus like, on cathedral and parish church in every hole and corner of the kingdom, spreading its leprosy over plain surface and moulding, stone-carving and wood pannelling, and obscuring mural paintings, colour, and gilding. The infection is not destroyed, and men will never be convinced that it is better to let the tooth of time eat its way into corbel and boss—rather adding new beauties than consuming old—than to mar the contour of a moulding, or to clog up the indents of a leaf. The very extent of efforts in those to whom the country allows the guardianship of our national monuments is the making them look clean, i. e. white. The greens and browns from Nature's palette are hidden beauties to those who deem the bucket and mop the true instruments of taste, and a whitewashed cottage the brightest ornament in a landscape. The noble interiors of Beverley minster, of York, and of our other cathedrals, when compared with the nave of Wesminster Abbey, whose columns retain their natural tints, lack much of the beauty which the latter possesses, despite the eye-sores on its wall. Rochester Cathedral was rich in mural decoration, yet it has been all obscured. At Chester, which we visited very few years since, we had, as usual, occasion to notice the ill effects of whitewash, and we ventured to express our opinion to one of the dignitaries of the cathedral, who concurred with us; yet we subsequently discovered that he himself had not long previous given directions for an additional coat. The fine Norman doorway of the Temple Church was no sooner rid of its accumulated whitewash than it received another application. At St. Albans, St. Cuthbert's screen, rich in flowers and foliage, has all its beauty obliterated or destroyed. The clerk of the church, an intelligent man and probably remembered by many of our readers, has taken some pains to clear a portion of this screen, and the delicacy of the carving is there apparent. At St. Mary's Church, Stafford, we were present during the late restorations, and saw the workmen remove the whitewash from some capitals, and found that shapeless lumps concealed foliage of elegant design, having traces of painting. St. Peter's Northampton, till a few years ago, seemed destitute of ornament; the capitals of its columns were mere lumps, and the whole interior devoid of beauty; fortunately the state of the building attracted the attention of Miss Baker, the sister of the historian of Northamptonshire, who, at some expense, and, it is said, considerable personal labour, had the capitals freed from their covering, and they now form the most beautiful series of Anglo-Norman architecture. Haddon Hall, in Derbyshire, a perfect sample of an old English residence, is preserved in its original state in all respects except the application of whitewash. The figures of relief, the ceilings, and ornaments formerly enriched with painting and gilding, periodically approach a step nearer to entire concealment. St. Paul's itself has not escaped, and the absence of the natural tints makes more than ever apparent the want of artificial colour, and revives our regret that so good an opportunity as was once available should have been lost. The colouring parts of Gothic churches was a valuable instrument in the hands of the artists of the middle ages; it was applied with judgment and effect, was mostly upon plain surface, and impaired the form of neither moulding nor ornament; but the first coat of *whitewash* shows like the last of Banquo's line, a mirror in which we see a long succession following after. Individual buildings there may be that have suffered little, and others which, within the last few years, have been entirely freed from whitewash, and the beauty of these is great; but we are certain that were the whole of our churches divested of what shrouds them as completely as the lava of Vesuvius did Pompeii and Herculaneum, the splendour of Gothic architecture would at once strike upon the beholder with a witchery and a power hardly felt even in these days of restoration and research.—*The Builder.*

HAPPINESS.

True happiness was never found on earth,
Your toil is fruitless if you seek it there,
'Tis an exotic of celestial birth;
And will not thrive but in celestial air.
Sweet plant of Paradise! thy seed is sown,
In here and there a breast of heavenly mould;
It rises slow, and buds—but ne'er was known
To blossom here—the climate is too cold.

GODFRID.

GODFRID was a dyer in the town of Bruchsall, in the diocese of Spires, a frequenter of drinking houses, and a singer of light songs, scurrilous, addicted to cups and tables, gesticulations and rhythmes, and one who never thought about saving his soul. Falling sick, he had great remorse and profound sorrow; so he sent for a priest, to whom he made a devout confession, received the communion, promising aloud to do penance if God should spare him. Relapsing into silence in about an hour after, he seemed to expire—this was about seven o'clock in the evening, on the 25th of May, 1321. As the night was advancing they would not bury him until the next day; so during that night the neighbours assembled and sat round his body, which was placed on a bier, and talked variously about the fate of his soul. At two o'clock in the morning he sat up, and said, 'O God, how just and hidden are thy judgments! Blessed be thy name, who hath been merciful to me penitent.'

All in an instant fled; some through the window, as the door was too small, others over the people's heads, in short as they could. Godfrid rose, went into the garden, and knelt down, where he was found still kneeling at sunrise. The crowds gathered round, and the priest, who had heard his confession, came and said, 'Godfrid, how is it with you?' But he, making the cross on his mouth, said 'O wehe! O wehe!' and thus groaning, walked to the church and entered, followed by the priest and all the people. There he fell prone on the pavement before the altar, with arms extended in a cross, and remained two hours. Then rising up, he said to the priest, "Lord, what doth this people want?" "They wish to know," replied the priest, "whether you were really dead, or where you were, or how you have come back to life." To whom he replied, "There is a time for speaking and a time for silence: let them go home, for they will hear nothing from me at present." So saying, he prostrated himself again on the earth. The people by the priest's order, left the church, all but four of the chief inhabitants with three priests: and when the crowd was gone, the priest charged Godfrid, on obedience to speak. "O good men of God!" cried he, "if I had one hundred mouths and as many tongues, I could not relate the one thousandth part of what I have seen and heard since with those below. Yea, I was dead, and for penitence, by God's mercy, permitted to return to the body. After my soul, with incredible pressure and grief, had gone out, I was presented at the divine judgment, though how, or by whom I know not. So full of sadness was I, that the whole world could not contain or understand it. All the sins of my life, to the very least, were clear and open before me. O good God, what confusion, what immense calamity encompassed me! I cannot say it, nor, without unutterable horror of heart, think of it: neither can I relate what was said to me by the judge, and the surrounding angels, and the demons, for it was ineffable. In a moment I was in the place of eternal and of temporal punishment, where I saw more souls tormented than I thought could have existed from the beginning, or would ever exist till the end: yet I knew and understood who every one was. I saw souls in hell of whose salvation no one in this life ever doubted; and I saw souls in purgatory, reserved for salvation, whom the judgment of men had pronounced to be unquestionably in hell. Think not that the disposition, quality, and mode of punishment, bore any resemblance to what painters and preachers represent: I felt that these torments could never be expressed by signs or tongues of men, for they are quite beyond what the human intelligence can conceive; so that our description of them, compared to reality, seemed like child's play. O! I would rather weep now than speak, only that you command me on obedience to speak. O, misery of all miseries! far surpassing all thought; how horribly and unutterably are to bed readed the torments of eternal woe! for the perpetual fire of hell lasts in the soul, which is always agitated with a fury inconceivable, always desolated with a terrific sadness, always associated with restless demons, without hope, without consolation, without any respite—only every thing is seen, and heard, and felt spiritually, and not as we figure it. There are various places of purifying flame, daily some are liberated, daily others arrive, all have the certain hope of deliverance, though the hour is not known. Much availeth the suffrages made in the charity of God,s and the pure fasts in the love of Christ, and the immolation of the Lord's body and blood in the Church. At the moment of my presentation, such a crowd of souls came from the world to be judged, that it seemed as if the whole human race had died with me: and lo! all of them save twelve heard the sentence of the reprobate! of these twelve, one was a friar of the rule of St. Francis, the other a poor beggar and leper, and these two passed straight to heaven, and the other ten had to pass first through purgatory. Lo! all that I have said is still only uttered in the way of similitudes, for I saw nothing with my carnal eyes, but remote from all senses, without a voice or any similitude, in a moment I spiritually saw and heard all. And now, Lord, that I have obeyed you, and spoken, spare me and yourself from henceforth, for I will speak of it no more to you or to any one. Endeavour to lead the people to repent, and preach to them what you think useful." From that time Godfrid lived twelve years in such austerity of life, that no one could doubt but that he had seen greater than what he said. No one ever after saw him smile, or joyous, or sleeping, or idle; no word useless or idle ever passed his lips more; no one saw him angry, or impatient, or heard him murmur against any one, or speak evil of those by whom he was injured, and they were many: winter and summer he went barefoot, in one grey vest always clad, he never shaved his beard, he daily fasted save on Sunday, neither ate fish nor flesh, nor tasted wine; injured or derided, always was he silent, and however injured never did he change his countenance. With the labour of his hands he supported his wife and children; he was always employed, constantly in prayer; he slept four hours at night; daily before the crucifix he knelt and gave himself stripes, seven times he repeated the Pater, and seven times kissed the earth in form of a cross; he often confessed, and daily heard mass. On feast days, he either prayed alone in his chamber with the door shut, or withdrawing into a neighbouring grove he walked alone with God. He slept on the naked ground, and had a stone for his pillow; and so lived till his death, when he was buried in the parish church before the altar of St. George. For such a soul, terror, perhaps, was the only medicine.

Mores Catholici.

PSALM CXLVIII.

"GEMS serene of heavenly brilliance,
Beaming on the dark blue sky,
Fires of planetary radiance,
Praise, O praise the Lord on high!

Ye that, borne on wings of swiftness,
Soaring to the source of day
Roam the liquid fields of ether,
Praise Him on your airy way!

Ye that climb the craggy mountains,
Ye that graze the plains below;
Swelling torrents, gushing fountains,
Praise Him as ye live or flow!

Thou with front upright, majestic,
Last and noblest work of God;
Monarch of the scenes around thee,
Praise Him in thy fair abode!

Tribes of air, and shores of ocean,
Urns of brightness in the sky;
Heav'n and earth, and all creation,
Praise, O praise the Lord on high!"

REV. HENRY ALFORD.

MARY ANNE;

OR, THE PIOUS WAITING-MAID.

It was evening, when a young girl, sad and lonely, slowly climbed a wooded hill from whence she still could see the village she had quitted. Her look was fixed on the church spire, where the rising moon had begun to shed a softened radiance, when suddenly the Angelus sounded, and the girl dropped on her knees, joining her hands and bending her forehead as she repeated the Angelic Salutation. When she pronounced the words, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done unto me according to thy word," the melancholy which had shadowed her young brow vanished, and an expression of resignation, nay almost of hope, succeeded. Lifting her little bundle from the dewy grass, she proceeded on her way, when the heavy step of a peasant woman was heard, and then a cheerful "Good evening, Mary Anne, good evening! Where art thou going so late?" "To the castle," replied the young villager with a melancholy smile. "Ah! Has it come to this," said the peasant, "and dost thou really mean to be waiting-maid to the Baroness Valnoir? hast thou a mind to endure thy purgatory in this world?" "Alas!" sighed Mary Anne, while a tear trembled in her eye. "They say that thy mistress is bitter as verjuice," continued the peasant, "and tormenting as the friends of that holy man Job; and then her people are rude and uncivil, and the old steward passes for no great things. Hast thou well considered, Mary Anne?" "Alas! yes, good Mother Theresa," replied the girl, "but what would you have me do? I have no relations in the world now—none since the cholera.....!" and here her voice was lost in sobs. "It is true," said the old peasant, with deep sympathy, "it is true—but take heart, Mary Anne; who knows but the Baroness may be better than she is called, though, to say the truth, her reputation has no balmy odour; she never sets her foot in a church, she eats meat on maigre days, and though she says to the poor, 'God help you,' she never helps them herself." "For Heaven's sake tell me no more," cried the poor girl. "Not another word," said Theresa, "only they tell me since she came to the castle a few weeks since, she has twice changed her cook, and you will be the fourth lady's maid!" "I will do my best to please Madame Valnoir," said Mary Anne, recovering her courage; "I will be so attentive, so exact in every thing, that I will succeed in giving satisfaction." "God grant it be so," said Theresa, as she proceeded on her way.

Arrived at the castle, the orphan presented herself to the steward, a melancholy sour-looking man, who reigned supreme over the household. "Ah! it is you, my girl," he said. "You are just in time; I have turned off the other hussy only this moment! You belong to honest parents, they tell me." "My parents are dead, Sir," replied Mary Anne. "God has taken them from me." "God has taken them, has he? hem! You are devout, it seems, and I doubt if that will just suit Madame the Baroness. But as for me, why I am liberal—it is quite the same to me; indeed religion is no bad thing for servants—it keeps them from stealing, from lying, and from cutting up the character of their superiors. Yes, I am of opinion with the great Voltaire, 'religion is necessary for the vulgar.' I will overlook yours, therefore; so come along to the Baroness."

The Baroness was an old woman, tall, thin, and stiff as a poker—fantastic and ridiculous, very philosophical in her ways, and sick of the world for want of useful employment. She haughtily measured the poor girl with her eyes, and said dryly, "Can you read?" The reply being in the affirmative, she made her sit down on a low stool, and placed a newspaper in her hands. Mary Anne read correctly, and with taste. "It is well," said Madame Valnoir, "the tone of your voice is sweet; it will lull me to sleep delightfully. Go, arrange your things in the room the steward will show you, and come back after supper."

Mary Anne sat at table with the other servants, and before beginning to eat, she, as usual, crossed herself and asked a blessing. The footman looked at her with an air of astonishment. "Child," said one of them, the handsome Jasmin, "I can easily perceive you are but newly escaped from your village." "But, Sir," said Mary Anne timidly, "why should I not thank that Divine Providence which furnishes me with daily bread? would it not be strange forgetfulness to receive benefits every day, and show no gratitude?" "Allow me to give you a wing of this fowl," said Jasmin, without noticing her remark. "To-day is a vigil and a fast," said Mary Anne, with simplicity. "We dispense ourselves from all that," said the housekeeper, bursting into a loud laugh "She is a downright bigot," said the coachman, emphasizing the word "bigot." The Baroness's bell sounded—"Good night, my little saint," said the housekeeper. "Remember me in your prayers," said the sceptical coachman. "With all my heart," said Mary Anne, smiling: "I suspect it may not be unnecessary." "The child understands raillery," said Jasmin. The coachman made a contemptuous grimace, and shrugged his shoulders.

The Baroness took long to undress, and when she got into bed, she ordered Mary Anne to take a book and read. "You will be careful to continue," she said, "whether I sleep or not; the prolonged sound of your voice will serve me

instead of opium." At three in the morning she was still reading. At daybreak she withdrew to her little room, and had not slept two hours when her mistress's bell awoke her. The Baroness was a botanist, and would herbalize in the park. Mary Anne followed her, with half-open eyes, carrying in her arms a great water-spaniel, whose feet were not to be sullied by the morning dew. When they returned to the house, Madame placed herself at the piano, striking the chords at random, while Mary Anne stood behind combing her hair. This was continued for two hours, when the Baroness ordered her carriage and drove out, first ordering the poor girl to employ the period of her absence in mending lace.

Mary Anne sat alone in the room, and twenty times did her eyes close and her head nod over her work; at length she was roused by the entrance of Jasmin, who came forward and seated himself beside her with an air of great familiarity. "Well, Miss," said he, with a sarcastic smile, "I hope you find your situation agreeable?" The poor girl sighed, but said nothing, for she could not tell a lie. "The Baroness," he continued, while he arranged his curls before a superb Venetian mirror, "the Baroness is an old fool, she makes herself ridiculous all day long, and deserves to be shut up in a madhouse." Mary Anne was shocked at this impertinence, and her conscience whispered, "it is an unworthy thing to speak against those whose bread we eat." "I am here to serve my lady, and not to judge her," she coldly replied. "Oh! you will not trust me! but you are wrong. I would not pay my court to the ruling powers at the expense of others. No, I am incapable of such a thing, 'pon my honour! but what are you doing? Working! God forgive you!" "To be sure I am working," said the orphan, looking with astonishment at the fop," ought I not to work when I am paid for doing so?" "That is all very well when the old witch is near you, but to work in her absence is pure folly. Would you like to read a new novel I have got from Paris?" "A novel!" said Mary Anne, "what is that?" "Poor child! what a little simpleton it is not to know what a novel is! but listen while I read you a passage that has made my heart go pit-a-pat for the last hour." He began, but Mary Anne soon cried, "Enough, enough!" and interrupting him in the midst of a most pathetic passage, "Why, said she, "did you not tell me at once that a novel was a bad book?"* "Now really," said Jasmin, "have you never read those charming Parisian romances that are all the go with the *literati* and the ladies? What do you read, Miss Mary Anne?" "The Lives of the Saints, Sir," she replied, "and other good and amusing books that are approved of by the clergy." "Coachee was not far wrong," ejaculated Jasmin; "the poor child is a crazy bigot!" Then turning gracefully on his heel he left the room. Scarcely had he quitted the chamber when the cook made her appearance. "What a miserable house this is," cried she, throwing herself on a chair; "who would stay in it if it were not for the high wages?" "What is the matter?" said Mary Anne, alarmed. "The matter!" cried the cook, "why, I am harassed and worked to death—have I not six breakfasts to prepare every morning? There is one for Madame, a cup of tea: that is soon made, to be sure; but then the chocolate for Jasmin, the beef-steak for the coachman, the cutlets for the steward, the coffee for the housekeeper, my own rice pottage—who could stand all that?" "I at least will try not to add to your embarrassment," said Mary Anne; "give me the first thing that comes to hand for my breakfast." "That would not be just," said the cook with an air of magnanimity. "You hold the first place in the household next the steward (old scrub that he is; I trust the devil will catch him some day!) Yes, you shall have your cup of tea with Madame, it is a genteeler beverage than chocolate, although it be more quickly made ready—are you satisfied, Miss?" "Whatever you please," said the orphan. "They laugh at you in the servants' hall," continued the cook, "but you are worth them all put together, my dear. I am not religious myself, it is true, for you see I have no time; nevertheless I never forget to say every night, 'My good God, your servant is going to bed;' that is always better than nothing, is it not?" "Certainly," said Mary Anne, with a good-humoured smile; "and when you have a few leisure minutes on Sunday you will go to a low mass with me, will you not?" "Bless me, child," said the cook, "I could just as easily fly in the air—listen to what I have to do." "But I will help you with your five breakfasts," said Mary Anne. "Why then to be sure I might manage it," said the cook. "Frances, Frances, where are you," cried a shrill voice, and the housekeeper opened the door. "I want a nice little supper," said Madame Felon, in an affected tone, "for I receive company this evening. I have invited a few friends; you will give us a blanc mange, a chocolate cream, and apricot tart, snow eggs," and striking her forehead, she added, "really it is too fatiguing to think, but you will add a few nice things of your own accord, Frances, and that's all."

"All, and enough too," said Frances, and whispering to Mary Anne, "the good lady regales her friends at the expense of her mistress—how I hate housekeepers!" She left the room. "May I flatter myself you will do me the honour of making

* French novels are generally very immoral.

one at my soirée, Miss?" said the housekeeper, when Frances had departed. "If I did," said the orphan boldly, "my conscience would never cease to reproach me." "Your conscience," said the housekeeper with an indignant and ironical air, "Oh, I forgot you were a saint, forsooth! but, after all" (she added in another tone), "you surely will not betray me."

"I will try to do my duty without compromising any one," said Mary Anne; "but if such things occur often, I shall be obliged to tell the steward." "You will, will you, you little viper, do it at your peril," said Madame Felon. "I am more afraid of sinning than of offending you," calmly replied Mary Anne. "We shall soon pack you about your business, my friend; I have the ear of the steward, and ....." "That is not true," said a husky voice, and the steward appeared from behind the door, where he had overheard the conversation. "I advise you, my good lady," said he to the housekeeper, "to countermand your collation, and send apologies to your guests, if you would not be obliged to pack up your trunks—I give you fair warning!" The housekeeper left the room precipitately. "Mary Anne," said the steward, in a rough but kind tone of voice, make haste and go to Paris with me, to purchase some things for your mistress; the horses are put to the carriage—make haste. The steward talked much to the young girl during the drive into the town, and was pleased with her honest good sense; but the old man was distrustful, and liked to prove every body. They alighted at the door of a magnificent shop, and he told her to purchase some silks her mistress wanted, and other expensive articles. She did so, and the bill came to four hundred francs (about £16.) "How much shall I put in the bill?" said the silk-mercer. "Did we not agree for four hundred francs?" asked Mary Anne. "The young lady has not been long with Madame Valnoir," said the mercer. "What about it?" asked Mary Anne. "Why, we always act handsomely towards the waiting-maids of noble ladies who do us the honour to purchase from us, and we will do the same for you, although you do not exact it like so many others. I will make out the bill for four hundred and fifty francs, that will be fifty francs in your pocket, my pretty young lady." "For what do you take me?" said she indignantly. "For a lady's maid, I suppose," replied the man with a sardonic grin. "And if this infamous transaction were discovered, Sir?" she asked. "Oh, keep your mind at ease," he replied; "my own interest will make me hold my tongue." "Write four hundred francs," said Mary Anne firmly; "this is the last time I will purchase any thing from you." "What a prodigy of a waiting-maid!" sneered the tempter. At this moment the steward Lebrun, who had witnessed the whole transaction from behind a pile of goods, came forward and paid the bill. They then returned home.

That evening Mary Anne found the Baroness in very bad humour. She was on the eve of losing a law-suit, on which great part of her fortune depended. All around her were made to feel the effects of her vexation, and as Mary Anne did not unfasten her robe sufficiently quick, she raised her hand to strike her. "You would not strike a servant," said the girl, colouring. "You are too much of a lady to do that!" The Baroness, ashamed of her violence, let her hand drop on the richly gilt arm of the chair she sat on, and looking at Mary Anne for a moment, she said, "You express yourself well, child; who brought you up?" "My poor mother, Madame, under the direction of our good curé." "They tell me you are most absurdly devout." "Indeed I am not, Madame. I serve God very indifferently, and I respect my superiors; that is all." A tap at the door interrupted the conversation: it was the steward who brought in the things purchased in Paris. Mary Anne, at her lady's command, left the room. Soon after the bell sounded, and on her entrance the Baroness looked exceedingly pleased. "Lebrun has just told me of your most upright and honourable conduct," she said. "I am exceedingly pleased with you; but you look tired, my good girl, go to bed; I will read myself asleep to-night; awaken me at six o'clock, we must go to botanize on the mountain; but you have no watch, I suspect," she continued, smiling; and going to her cabinet she took from it a neat little watch, which she presented to Mary Anne as a testimony of her extreme approbation.

The orphan had proved to her mistress, that religion was a most necessary qualification in a servant, and she soon proved to her fellow-servants that religion was the remedy for privations and domestic annoyances. She now became a general favourite; for she thought of others rather than of herself, and was meek, humble, and obliging to every one. But a reverse was about to happen to the Baroness, and Mary Anne's fidelity was to be tried. Madame Valnoir received accounts of her lost law-suit, which painfully affected her. The orphan redoubled her attentions, the unreasonable caprices of her mistress only inspired her with deeper commiseration. "Madame suffers from distress of mind," thought the amiable young girl, "this affects her health and her temper, and she does not know that in religion she could find a balm for every wound; poor Madame, how I pity her." One evening Madame Valnoir seemed more depressed than usual; she went early to bed, and said to Mary Anne, "My child, my heart is

heavy, go seek a book that will console me." Mary Anne ran to her little room, and returned triumphantly with the "Lives of the Saints." In spite of her vexation and distress, the old woman burst into a fit of laughing. "I have no taste for such things," said she; "bring me a book from my own library, it is large enough without trespassing on that of other people;" and she named the book she wanted. The young waiting-maid began the first chapter; it was not exactly a bad book, but it was one of those pretended philosophical productions so common in France. A smile was on the girl's lips. "What are you laughing at?" said her mistress. "Pardon me, Madame," she replied, "but I think that these high-sounding phrases and far-fetched ideas would never console me in affliction." "And what would you read in such circumstances?" "I would read The Imitation of Jesus Christ." "The Imitation!" repeated the Baroness, astonished. "Why, that is the book that converted La Harpe. This is very odd; and you say this book is consoling?" "Oh, Madame, I have never sought consolation any where else." "Well, we will try it some day, perhaps; in the meantime read me some pages from that merry devil Voltaire, his bitter satire used to amuse me so much when I was" ..... the old woman let her head drop pensively on her breast, she sighed, and finished the sentence—"when I was happy!" Mary Anne refused the book her mistress would put in her hands. "You cannot ask me to read such a work as that," she said, clasping her hands in earnest entreaty. "You cannot bid me read a book that outrages my God, and would ruin my morals." "Shut it, child," said her mistress, "we will read something else." She kissed her lady's land, her eyes beaming with gratitude. "You are a little syren," said the Baroness, passing her fingers through the fair tresses of the girl. "You are a little syren, and persuade me to do whatever you please. You are almost like a daughter to me. I have lost all my own children, and that has hardened my heart; one of my lost girls would have been just your age—perhaps had they lived I might have believed there was a God!" Mary Anne knelt at the bed-side of her mistress, and sobbed bitterly. "Go to sleep, my child," said she, "I wish to be alone," and the girl left her.

From this day the Baroness placed unlimited confidence in Mary Anne, and rendered her servitude easy and sweet. One of her servants leaving her, she ordered the steward to look for a pious girl to supply her place. The steward could not believe his ears. "Yes," said the Baroness, smiling, "I am in earnest. Mary Anne has taught me that piety only can be depended on." "Why," replied the old man, "Mary Anne is indeed a good girl, though she can preach sometimes, and forced me to take off my hat when I passed the door of the village church!" "Indeed!" said the Baroness. "Yes," continued the steward, "I believe she is capable of converting me, in spite of the beard of the great Voltaire!"

It began to be whispered in the servants' hall that the affairs of the Baroness were in bad condition, and each one made arrangements for seeking another service. One evening, Frances, the cook, came to Mary Anne, and advised her to think of leaving also. "I know such an excellent place you could get," said she, "and where your wages would be doubled." "But Madame Valnoir is pleased with me," replied the girl, "and why should I leave her?" "Why, you see," said Frances, "Jasmin and the housekeeper tell me, that Madame's fortune is ruined; they are even afraid of losing the wages due to them." "But that is no reason for my leaving her." "What a simpleton you are," said the cook, walking away.

It was but too true, the lady's affairs became more and more embarrassed. Her horses and carriages were sold, her establishment broken up, and with the faithful Mary Anne she retired to an obscure lodging in the Fauxbourg St. Germain.

One evening the old lady returned from a ramble through the streets, excessively fatigued. Mary Anne, more attentive than ever, hastened to prepare her frugal supper. "Thank you, thank you," said the Baroness. "Your kind attention touches me to the heart, dear child; but you must not suffer by your generosity. I have just spoken of you to my friend, the Countess de B., whom you have seen in my house; she will be delighted to take you for her own maid, or rather for her companion. I shall be sorry to lose you, but it is for your advantage, my dear child." Mary Anne burst into tears: "Have I displeased you in any thing?" she said, and sobbed aloud. "My poor child," said the Baroness, deeply touched, "do you take me for a monster, that I would part willingly from you?" "I cannot leave you, Madame, with no person to care for you?" "But frankly, my child, I have not the means of paying your wages." "I can work for both, if you will permit me." "Mary Anne," cried the Baroness, "you are an angel—where have you learned such sentiments?" "If there be any good in me," she replied, "I owe it to my religion." "Child, you have conquered," cried Madame Valnoir, and seizing some infidel books she had been perusing, threw them into the fire. "Go, impotent comforters," she said, "henceforward I will seek my consolation in the books that have taught Mary Anne to be an angel—bring me the volume I once refused, my child: bring me The Imitation of Jesus Christ!"

Grace operated its miracles in the heart of the Baroness. The curé of Notre Dame de Victoire was sent for; he spoke long with the old lady—he offered the Holy Sacrifice in honour of the immaculate Heart of Mary; and who has ever implored her intercession in vain? In a few short months Madame Valnoir became the edification of the whole parish, and even in this world Providence failed not to send her a reward. Some relations dying, she again became possessed of considerable property. As soon as her affairs were arranged, she solemnly adopted Mary Anne, and made a will in her favour. Their days passed pleasantly together; every morning they might be seen at the door of the parish church distributing liberal alms to the poor, who blessed the noble Baroness Valnoir, and the sweet girl on whose arm she leaned, the humble, the good, and the pious Mary Anne. M. L.

EGYPTIAN MODE OF HATCHING EGGS BY ARTIFICIAL MEANS.

The poultry-yard was not stocked alone by the natural process of rearing chickens, but also by artificial means, which the ingenuity of this people had discovered; and the eggs of fowls and geese were hatched by ovens, heated to a requisite temperature, which imitated the warmth, while they dispensed with the necessity of the sitting of the hens. This custom has been handed down to their descendants; and the Copts, in various parts of Egypt, supply the markets during the Spring with the chickens this ingenious process has enabled them to rear. I may be excused for introducing a brief notice of the means employed for this purpose.

The proprietors of ovens make the round of the villages in their vicinity, and collect the eggs from the peasants, which they give in charge to the rearers, who, without any previous examination, place all they receive on mats strewed with bran, in a room eleven feet square, with a flat roof, and about four feet high; over which is a chamber of the same size, but with a vaulted roof, and about nine feet high; a small aperture in the centre of the vault admitting the light during the warm weather, and another of larger diameter, immediately below, communicating with the oven, through whose ceiling it is pierced. By this, also, the man descends to observe the eggs; but in the cold season both these are closed, and a lamp is kept burning instead; another entrance at the front part of the oven being then used for the same purpose, and shut immediately on his quitting it. In the upper room is the fire, disposed along the whole length of two troughs, based with earthen slabs, reaching from one side to the other, against the front and back walls. In the oven the eggs are placed in a line corresponding to, and immediately below the fires, where they remain half-a-day; they are then removed, and others (from a heap in the centre, are arranged in their stead, and so on, till all have taken their equal share of the warmest positions, to which each set returns again and again, in regular succession, till the expiration of six days. They are then held up one by one, towards a strong light, and if the egg appears clear, and of a uniform colour, it is evident it has not succeeded; but if it shows an opaque substance within, or the appearance of different shades, the chicken is already formed; and these last are all returned to the oven for other four days, their positions being changed as before.

At the expiration of the four days they are removed to another oven, over which, however, are no fires. Here they lie for five days in one heap, the aperture in the roof and the door being closed with tow, to exclude the air; after which they are placed separately, about one or two inches apart, over the whole surface of the mats, which are sprinkled with a little bran. They are now continually turned and shifted from one part of the mats to another, for six or seven days, all air being carefully excluded; during which time they are constantly examined by one of the rearers, who applies each singly to his upper eyelid. Those which are cold, prove the chickens to be dead, but warmth greater than the human skin, is the favourable sign that they have succeeded. At length the chicken, breaking its egg, gradually comes forth; and it is not a little amusing to see some half-exposed, and half-covered by the shell, while they chirp in their confinement, which they appear so desirous to quit. The total number of days is generally twenty-one, but some eggs with a thin shell, remain but eighteen. The average of those that succeed is two-thirds, which are returned by the rearers to the proprietors, who restore to the peasants one-half of the chickens, the other being kept as payment for their expenses. The size of the building depends, of course, on the means or speculation of the proprietors; but the general plan is usually the same, being a series of eight or ten ovens (and upper rooms) on either side of a passage, about a hundred feet by fifteen, and twelve in height. The thermometer, in any part of it, is not less than 24° Rêaum. (86° Fahr.,) but the average heat in the ovens does not reach the temperature of fowls, which is 32° Rêaum. Excessive heat or cold are equally prejudicial to this process; and the only season of the year at which they succeed, is from the 15th of Imsheer (23rd of February) to the 15th of Baramoodeh (24th of April), beyond which time they can scarcely reckon upon more than two or three in a hundred.—*Wilkinson's Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians.*

KING LOG AND KING STORK.

A Sir Charles Price, who had an estate in this island infested by rats, imported, with much trouble, a very large and strong species, for the purpose of extirpating the others. The new comers answered his purpose to a miracle; they attacked the native rats with such spirit, that, in a short time, they had the whole property to themselves; but no sooner had they done their duty upon the rats, than they extended their exertions to the cats, of whom their strength and size at length enabled them completely to get the better; and, since that last victory, Sir Charles Price's rats, as they are called, have increased so prodigiously, that this single species is now a greater nuisance to this island than all the others before them were together. The best mode of destroying rats here is with terriers. Those imported from England soon grow useless, being blinded by the sun; but their puppies, born in Jamaica, are provided by nature with a protecting film over their eyes, which effectually secures them against that calamity.—*Lewis's Residence in the West Indies.*

THE CHURCH OF *ROME* TO THE OXFORD INQUIRER.

SUGGESTED BY THE OXFORD TRACT NO. 90.

Searcher for Truth's pure light,
Long bound in error's night,
Thy haughty captor's wrath now snaps thy chain:
Cast off, renounced, reviled—
Come, lone and sorrowing child—
Come to thy mother's pitying breast again!

Oh! thou hast wandered long
Through thorny paths of wrong,
Mocking my deep love with unfilial scorn:
Yet no reproach severe,
No anger waits thee here,
Back to thy home, forgiven one, return.

The towers where thou *hast* dwelt
On sand and ruins built,
Are bent and quivering to the tempest's shock:
Trembler! in lone dismay,
Watching o'er that decay,
Come! shield thee in the fortress of the Rock!

All that thy soul doth feel
Of fiery faith and zeal,
Now sadly fainting in obstruction cold—
Shall there on pinions bright
Bear up to heaven thy flight:
Return then, wanderer, to the ancient fold.

The treasures thou hast sought
Through mines of olden thought
Are locked with golden keys—by *me* possess'd:
All, all shall now unclose;
Come, then, to thy repose—
Come, toil-worn spirit, and receive thy rest!

M. E.

RAILWAY TAXATION.

THE gross receipts on 2000 miles of English railway for 1843 were 7,002,004*l.*; the working expenses 2,222,924*l.*; the government duty paid, 191,081*l.*; interest on loans, &c., 1,070,000*l.*; local rates and taxes, 156,000*l.*—forming a total expenditure (estimated) of 3,024,834*l.*, leaving only 3,111,000*l.* (upon an invested capital of 80 to 100 millions) for "dividend," and that subject to income tax, &c. Taking 10 acres to a mile of railway, those 2000 miles would give 20,000 acres of land, which as land would be assessed at 14,000*l.*, paying a rate of 4000*l.*, but which, as railway, is assessed at 780,000*l.* at least paying 156,000*l.* a-year rates, and that amount is fast increasing. Irish, Scotch, Welsh, and continental railways, and English canals, &c., are exempt from this principle and burden of taxation. Besides these contributions, those 2000 miles of railway pay income tax, 90,000*l.*, besides land tax, tithe, assessed taxes, &c.; and their property is assessed for the purposes of taxation at 48 times its legitimate amount, which is gradually increasing; and that assessment forms the guide for railway contribution to the 12 millions of yearly local taxation, the 5 millions of tithe, the 1½ million of land tax, besides the assessed taxes, sewers, and state taxes.—*Railway Times.*

THE CATHOLIC FATHER.

"I will fill him with length of days: and I will show him my salvation."
Psalm 90. Qui habita

Every good christian, and especially every good catholic, will endeavour most strenuously to observe the commandments of God, he will let them be ever present to his mind, to stimulate him to their faithful observance. By the 4th commandment we are enjoined to honour and obey our parents, and when we attentively consider their position, and their responsibility both before God and men, we shall not hesitate diligently to practise this divine precept. A catholic father is charged with the performance of the most important duties, upon the exact fulfilment of which the happiness of his offspring mainly depends. When such a father strictly observes the laws and ordinances of his holy religion, he in some measure compels his children to imitate his righteous example. The following story will intelligibly demonstrate the advantages accruing from faithfully discharging the duties of the parental office:—

In the town of Halifax, in the county of York, there dwelt a virtuous and honest tradesman professing the catholic religion, and although he had to contend with much bigotry and prejudice in attending to the business of his religion, yet the uniform suavity of his deportment, and his unvariable charitable disposition, increased the number of his friends, and subdued the hostility of his enemies: his just and honest dealings procured him a preference, and sort of proverbiality amongst his townsmen, and caused his shop to be much frequented; his gains in trade rapidly accumulated, and seemed to increase with his diligence and assiduity; so much is a gracious providence pleased to convert into blessings the substance wherewith we serve our temporal purposes. He was universally respected: a man so zealous in the discharge of every moral and religious obligation, could not fail to fulfil most efficiently the duties of a catholic father. He trained his children in the fear of God; he taught them to honour all men; to be just, and charitable, to be loving, and kind; to be assiduous in the exercise of every religious duty, engaging to pronounce heaven's benediction upon their labours when their hearts were fortified with such excellent catholic impressions. Time, which resolveth all things, now commenced his attacks upon the constitution of this amiable catholic parent, and, bending under the weight of years, he eventually paid the debt of nature. In his last moments he edified all that approached him, so resigned was he to the appointment of heaven which called him hence to possess the felicity of the just. His children, to commemorate their filial duty and affection for a father so truly good, erected a tombstone in the church-yard in which his remains were deposited, with the following interesting inscription:

"Sacred to the memory of a catholic father, whose virtues endeared him to all, but to none more indissolubly than his affectionate children, who have reared this unostentatious memorial of their bereavement and their love." P. K.

R. I. P.

Gratitude for reproof and being found fault with, is a mark that we love the virtues contrary to those failings for which we are corrected or reproved; and, therefore, it is a great sign of our making progress towards perfection.—*S. Francis of Sales.*

Venerable Berchmans had always a great desire to be told of his faults publicly, and to be reproved for them: and whenever this happened, it was a great consolation to him. To this end he wrote them down on paper.

The greatest security that we can have in this world of being in the grace of God, consists not so much in sensible feelings of his divine love, as in the pure and irrevocable abandonment of all that we are and have into his hands, and in a firm resolution never to consent to any sin, either great or small.—*S. Francis of Sales.*

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